

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-36 are presently pending in this case. Claims 7-36 are withdrawn. Claims 1 and 3-6 are amended and Claim 2 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment. As amended Claims 1 and 3-6 are supported by the original disclosure,¹ no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 1 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Nagai (U.S. Patent No. 6,108,501). However, Claims 2-4 and 6 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise were indicated as including allowable subject matter if re-written in independent form.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that Claims 2-4 and 6 include allowable subject matter.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 1 as anticipated by Nagai, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter originally recited in Claim 2, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Consequently, amended Claim 1 (and Claims 3-6 dependent therefrom) is not anticipated by Nagai and is patentable thereover.

¹See, e.g., the specification at page 50, line 10 to page 51, line 7.

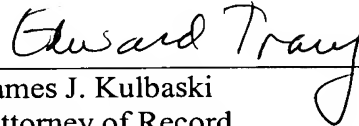
Application No. 10/644,007
Reply to Office Action of January 25, 2008

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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